



Village of Winnetka

Environmental and Forestry Commission Meeting

September 13, 2023 at 7:00 PM
Winnetka Village Hall Council Chambers - 510
Green Bay Road

AGENDA

1. **Introduction & Chair's Remarks**
2. **Public Comments**
3. **New Business / Old Business Updates**
 - a. Presentation by New Trier High School Green Award Recipient David Conway
4. **Communications**
 - a. Recycling Tips
5. **Committee/Staff Reports**
6. **Open Forum**
7. **Adjournment**

NOTICE

All agenda materials are available at villageofwinnetka.org (**Government > Council Information > Agenda Packets & Minutes**); the Reference Desk at the Winnetka Library; or in the Manager's Office at Village Hall (2nd floor). The Village of Winnetka, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, requests that all persons with disabilities who require certain accommodations to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting or have questions about the accessibility of the meeting or facilities, contact the Village ADA Coordinator, at 510 Green Bay Road, Winnetka, Illinois 60093, 847-716-3543; T.D.D. 847-501-6041.

What to do with Paper Napkins, Towels, and Tissues

Used paper-based goods such as paper napkins, towels, and tissues are not recyclable. These items have already been recycled numerous times and are at the end of their life cycle. Also, these types of paper may have food or other organic waste on them, which would contaminate other recyclable items. These used paper goods may be composted in your backyard and through one of Winnetka's container swap compost haulers (Collective Resource Compost and WasteNot Compost) **[insert links to hauler websites]**. In fact, these used paper goods **should** be composted, as they are exactly the kind of carbon-rich material that food waste, which is nitrogen-rich, needs to decompose properly. And these used paper goods, like food waste, release methane when they are added to landfills where they cannot decompose properly. Please try to compost your used paper goods rather than landfill or recycle them.

What to do with Plastic Utensils

Don't buy them!! Americans use **40 billion** plastic utensils every year. Fifty percent of the plastic used in the US is used once and discarded. We discard more than 30 million tons of plastic annually, and only 8 percent gets recycled. The rest piles up in landfills, is incinerated, or becomes litter. Plastic utensils are not recyclable or compostable (and allegedly compostable utensils may not break down as easily as advertised). Best to avoid single-use plastic utensils altogether. Use reusable utensils at home and say "No thanks" to plastic utensils when ordering to go – our local restaurants will thank you too!

What to do with Polystyrene (aka Styrofoam®)

Winnetka recycles both block-style and clean food service polystyrene foam (sometimes referred to as "Styrofoam®") through a partnership between the Winnetka Public Works Department, the Winnetka Environmental and Forestry Commission, and Dart Container Corporation. Winnetka citizens collect their polystyrene and drop it off at the Public Works building. The Public Works Department stores it until Dart collects the material and transports it to their recycling facility in North Aurora. There, contaminants are removed, the polystyrene is compacted in special machines called densifiers, and then it is delivered to companies that use it to make new products, such as picture frames. Winnetka's polystyrene recycling program started as a 2-week option around the holidays in 2012, expanded to a standing year-round collection in the Public Works Building lobby in 2013, and shifted to a once-a-week drop off option on Mondays from 1 - 3pm in May 2021. **[link to recycling guide]**

Recycling is Worth the Effort – Do Not Give Up or Get Discouraged!

Yes, recycling is still worth the effort; we just have to get better at "Recycling Right!" We have to recycle as much as we can of the recyclable materials, and let the other stuff go – no aspirational or "wish" cycling. Follow state and local recycling guidance. Do not put non-recyclable items in the recycling container, clean or otherwise, as that just gives the facilities more sorting to do and the materials inevitably and unavoidably end up in the landfill anyway. Or worse, they slip through and end up as a "contaminate" in the recyclable plastics lowering the quality of the material in the bale. This makes it harder to market and is a major detriment to the recycling industry as a whole. Do not let perfection be the enemy of good. You can do it, and your actions do make a difference! **[add links to Winnetka's**

RECYCLING GUIDELINES

YES!

Clean & Empty

Replace lids & caps

**Put material in loose
- Not in bags**



METAL

Steel & Aluminum Containers and Foil



PAPER

Cardboard (flattened),
Office Paper, Newspaper, Magazines



GLASS

Containers: Bottles & Jars Only



PLASTIC

Containers: Bottles, Tubs, Jugs,
and Jars Only



CARTONS

NO!



**No Plastic Bags
No Plastic Wrap**
(return clean to retailer)



No Big Items (Electronics, Wood,
Propane Tanks, Scrap Metal or Styrofoam –
see countyofkane.org/recycling for other recycling options)



No Tangles (Hangers, Hoses,
Wire, Cords, Ropes or Chains)



No Clothing
Textiles or Shoes (donate)



**No Food, Liquid, Diapers,
Batteries or Needles**



No Shredded Paper
(see countyofkane.org/recycling for other recycling options)



Recycling Tip – Make sure all containers are free of liquid and food residue

When recycling used food containers, it is important to remove leftover food waste and liquids. Containers or cardboard that have excessive food waste on them may contaminate other recyclable materials they are mixed in with. When recyclables are heavily contaminated with food waste, they become less desirable for resale. Empty all liquids and remove as much food waste as you can before putting your hard plastic, aluminum, and glass containers in your recycling bin. Many paper-based food containers may be compostable through one of Winnetka's container swap compost haulers (Collective Resource Compost and WasteNot Compost) [\[insert links to hauler websites\]](#).

Recycling Tip – Hard Plastics

Confused about whether and how to recycle hard plastics? You are not alone! The system is complicated but there actually are some rules that help simplify things. Here are five rules to remember about recycling hard plastics:

1. Forget the number inside the chasing arrow symbol! It only tells you the resin type and does not mean the item is recyclable through our local program or in our local markets.
2. Only recycle CONTAINERS — remember **Bottles, Jars, Jugs, and Tubs** — in all residential and commercial recycling bins, totes, and dumpsters in Winnetka.
3. If it is not one of the above shapes, then it is not recyclable in Winnetka. All else goes in the trash. Try to rethink your purchases to avoid excess plastic packaging and single-use plastics.
4. Rinse lightly, only if needed.
5. Put the lids back on the empty containers to recycle together.



Recycling Tip – Plastic bags and film

Plastic bags, wraps, and film can be recycled into new materials – they simply require a different collection system and processing equipment than many curbside recycling programs provide. DO NOT put plastic bags/wraps/film in your bin as the Village's recycling provider, Lakeshore Recycling Services, does not accept these items.

Plastic bags may be brought to grocery stores for recycling. Plastic bags are made out of "film", or thin flexible sheets of plastic. The majority of plastic films are made from polyethylene (PE) resin and are readily recyclable if the material is clean and dry. Plastic wrap and film packaging are generally #2 and #4 plastic, both of which are recyclable. Most plastic bags are recycled into composite lumber, but can actually become a wide variety of products.

Clean and dry plastic bags, film, wrap can be recycled at many grocery and retail stores. Be sure to completely empty the bags, film, and wrap of all food and liquid waste before taking them to your nearest participating store. A list of plastics that may be recycled at most stores is below:

- Grocery bags
- Bread bags
- Case overwrap (e.g. water, soda and juice bottles)
- Dry cleaning bags
- Newspaper sleeves
- Ice bags
- Wood pellet bags
- Ziplock/reclosable bags
- Produce bags
- Bubble wrap
- Salt bags
- Cereal bags



Recycling Tip -- Batteries

About Alkaline Batteries:

According to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, single-use, non-rechargeable alkaline batteries AAA, AA, C, D 6v & 9v are classified as "non-hazardous" and may be safely disposed of with normal household waste. Winnetka's waste transfer station stopped accepting batteries for recycling a

few years ago and Winnetka does not have another way to recycle batteries at this time. Alkaline batteries may be accepted for recycling at some retail outlets like Best Buy. Call retail stores to confirm.

About Rechargeable Batteries:

Rechargeable batteries Nickel Cadmium (NiCd), Nickel Metal Hydride (NiMH), Lithium, Zinc-Air, Silver-oxide, and Small Sealed Lead Acid contain mercury and other heavy metals and should be recycled. There are many retail stores (Ace Hardware, Best Buy, IKEA, Lowe's, Staples, Target, etc.) that accept rechargeable batteries. Call retail stores to confirm acceptable batteries. To avoid the risk of cross-contact of battery terminals, which can cause a spark and create a fire, place a piece of tape over each terminal or contact point.

About Lead Acid Batteries:

Lead acid batteries (automotive, marine, and sump pump) are prohibited by Illinois state law from being disposed of in the trash. Gas stations, auto parts stores, and other retail stores provide outlets for disposing of these batteries.

Why do the contact points of rechargeable batteries need to be taped?

The contact points of each rechargeable battery should be covered with masking tape before being taken to a drop-off location. It is important that the end points on batteries do not touch each other during collection or transportation because contact can cause a spark and ignite a fire.

For a list of retailers who recycle rechargeable and lead acid batteries visit SWANCC's [Battery Recycling](#) web page.

Recycling Tip -- Textile Recycling

Before getting rid of your old clothes, consider recycling or donating them to a textile recycling organization in the area. Check with your local community organizations, church, shelter, hospital, schools or libraries for available programs. Some of these organizations that offer textile recycling programs include: Christ Church of Winnetka, Winnetka Thrift Shop, Amvets, Goodwill Industries, Avenues to Independence, Winnetka Congregational Church, Salvation Army, Chicago Textile Recycling and USAgain.